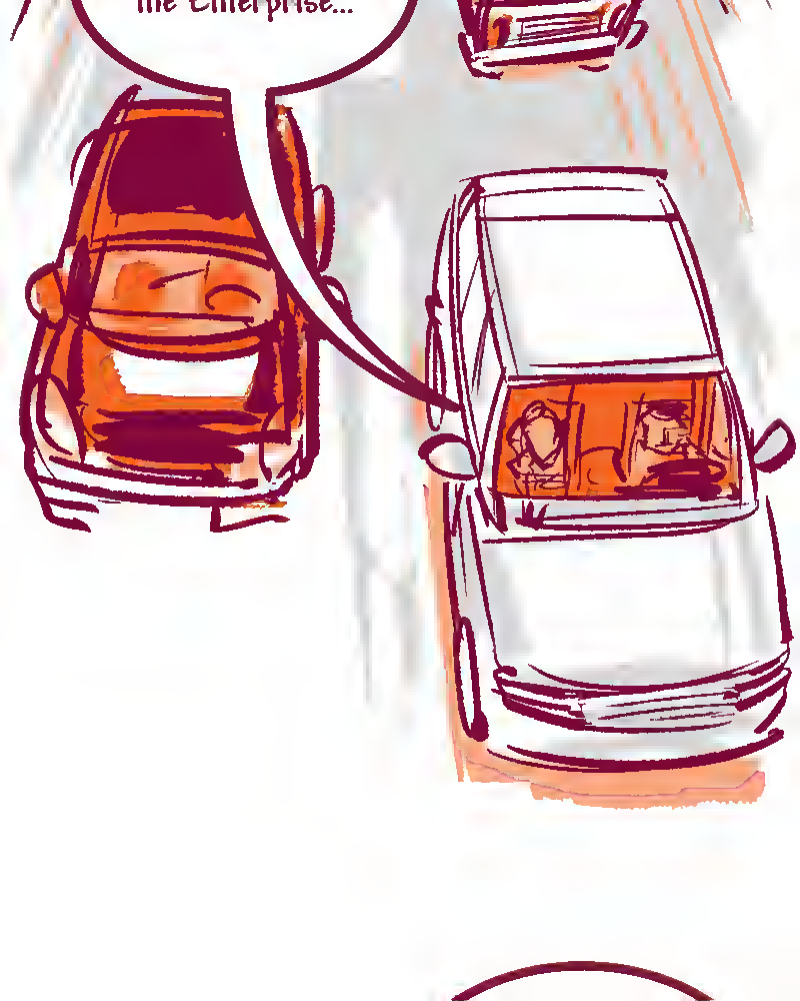
Oooh, this one has an elevator.
Hmm...too Ziegfeld Follies.

Too Temple of Doom... Too like a giant dick...
Too bridge of


the Enterprise...

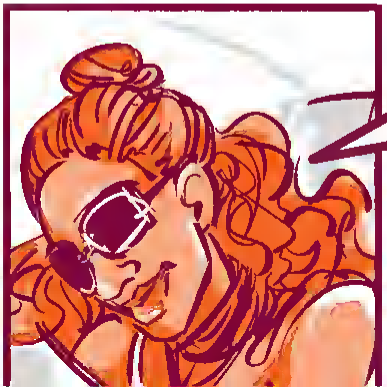
Too...? I think it's supposed to be a lotus?

It looks like a vagina.

And this one's just an exact copy of Celine's Vegas setup.

Ugh, why is everything hideous?

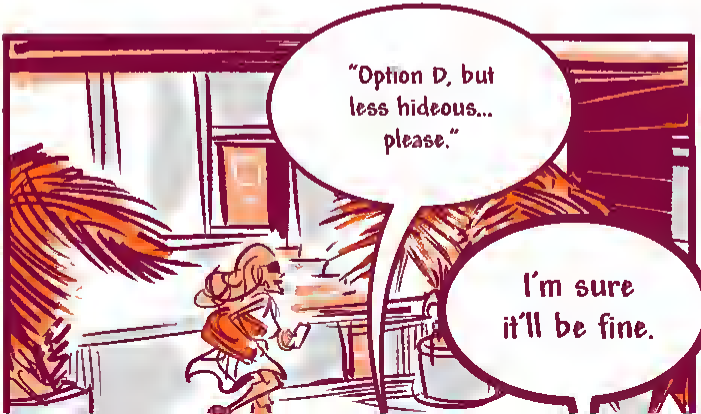
Go with the vagina.

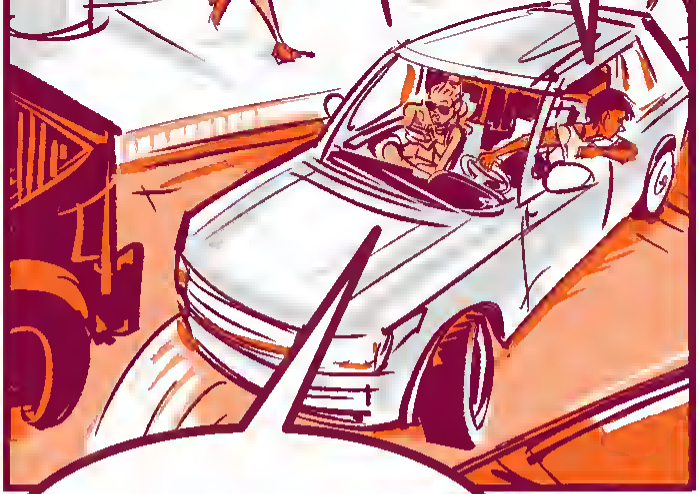


That's your answer for everything.

I guess this Trekkie one isn't *that* bad...

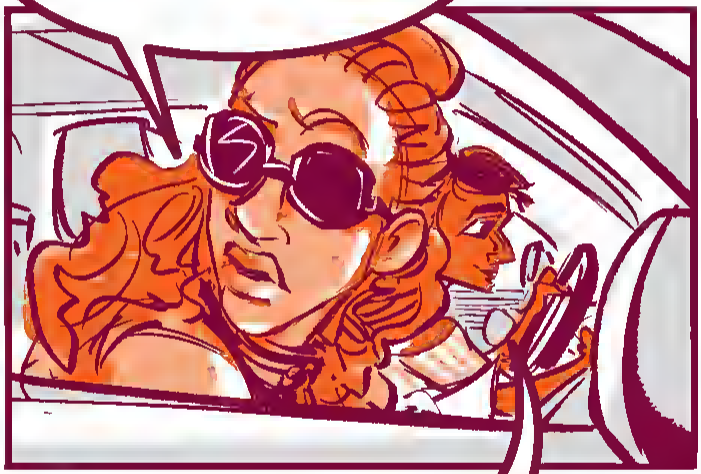
If they get rid of all the spaceshippy parts.





The first tour date isn't *that* far away, and these proposals are late as it is.

I don't want to waste time asking for more options when we could be starting on lighting and choreography design instead.


Wait, where are we? I thought the conference call at Javier's office was next.
That's not 'til 3.
Isn't it almost—?

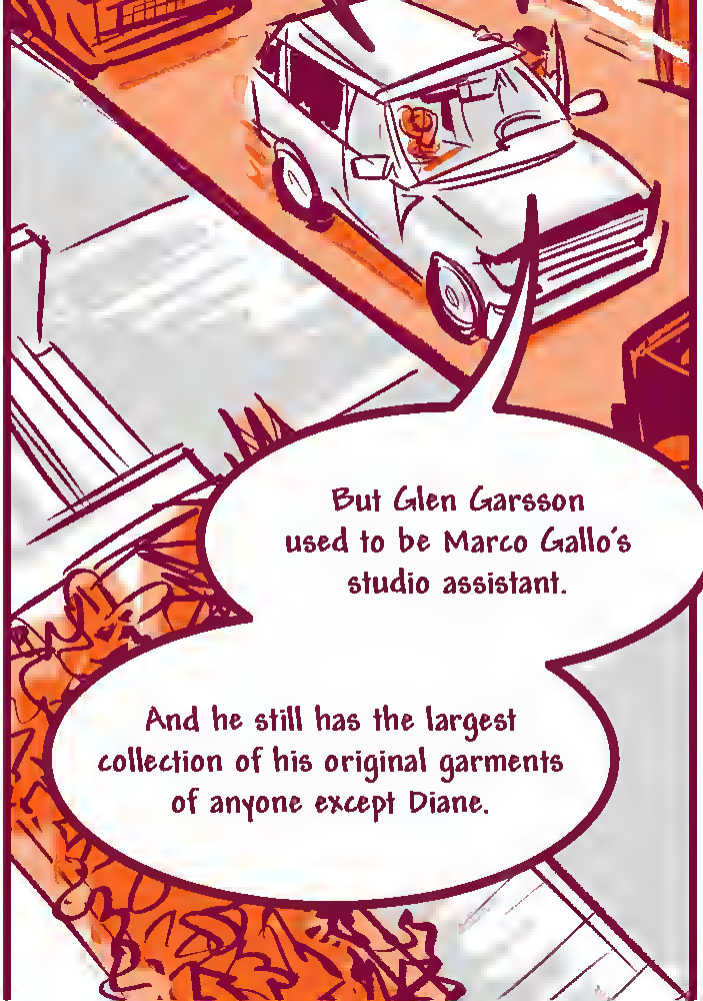
Noon.

This is the corporate headquarters of Glen Garsson's fashion house.

Why does that name sound familiar?

Do I have an endorsement deal with them?

Nope.


But Glen Garsson used to be Marco Gallo's studio assistant.
And he still has the largest collection of his original garments of anyone except Diane.

You set this up?

Do you have an ex in the design department or something?

Ha ha—*no*. I cold-called them.

But I figured you could go

in, be beautiful and famous at the fashion people...

Ask in passing whether they've had any break-ins, see if Garsson knows who might be after the Gallos...

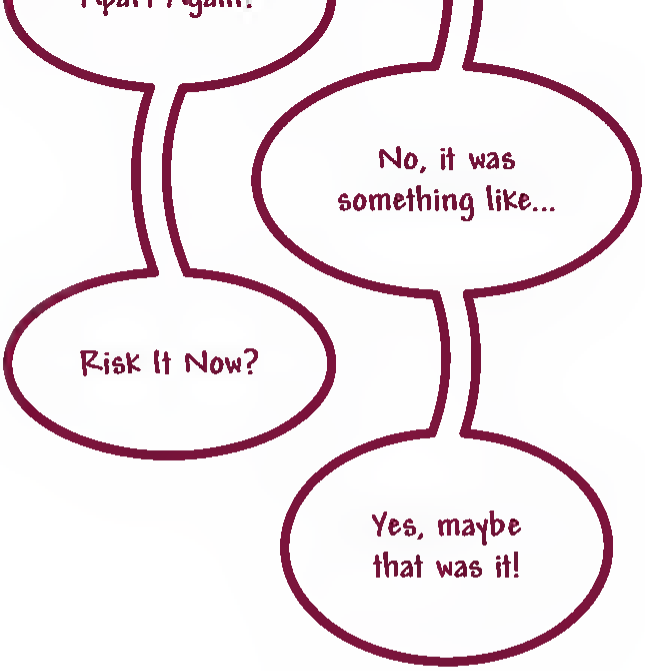
You are an excellent henchwoman.

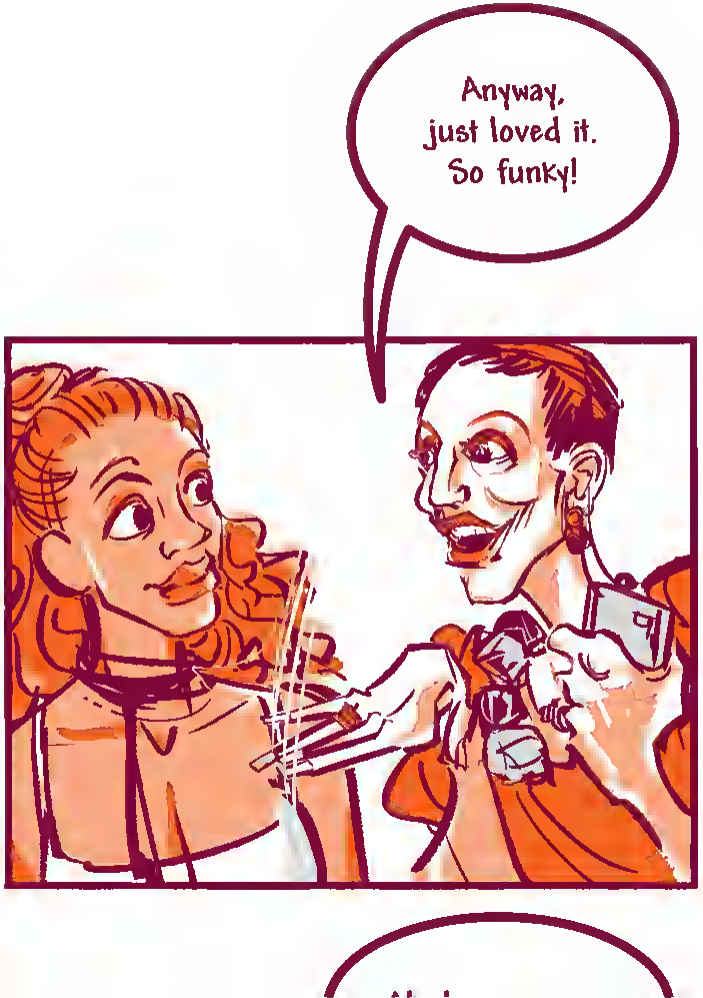
POWER BALLAD

CHAPTER TEN

Ms. Peterson, we were so delighted when your assistant said you were interested in stopping by.
I think the new collection is really doing a great job of shifting perception of our brand in a younger, more...urban direction.
-CLANG!

That's great.
And I just loved ...oh, what was that song you had out a few years ago...
Mm... Burn This Too?
No...
Apart Again?


Again?
No, it was something like...
Risk It Now?
Yes, maybe that was it!

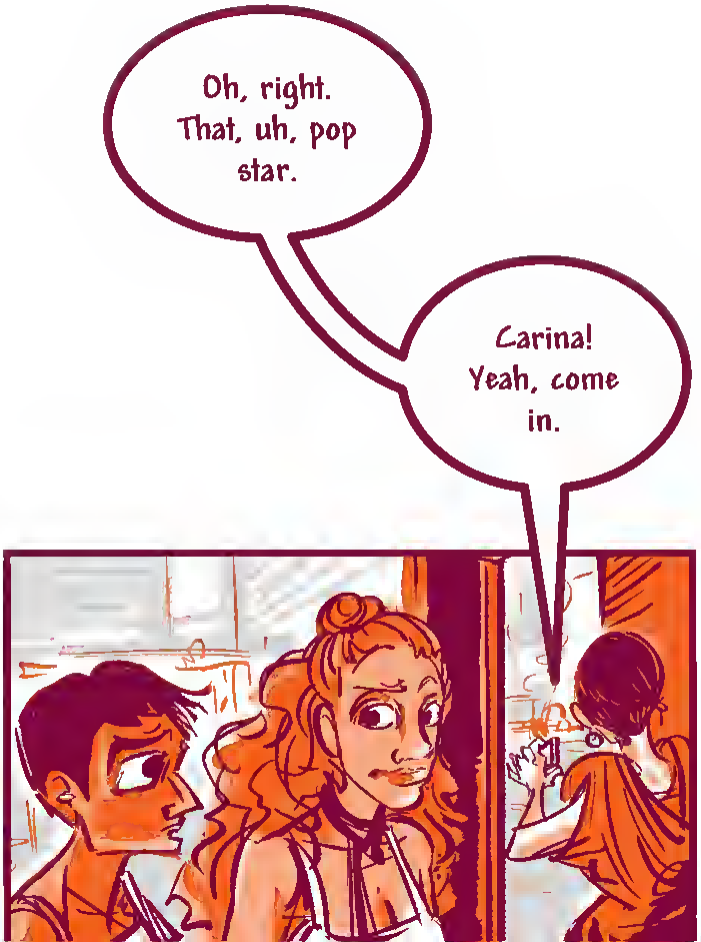

Anyway,
just loved it.
So funky!

Ah, here we are.

Knock knock!

Glen? Is this a good time?

Good time for *what*?


Oh, right. That, uh, pop star.
Carina! Yeah, come in.

Glen Garsson.

Lovely to meet you. This is Meera.

Right, so what brings you here today?

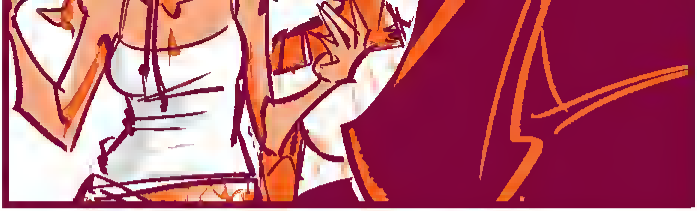
Well, Ellen was just telling us a bit more about your most recent collection—

sounds like the new direction's working out

pretty well!

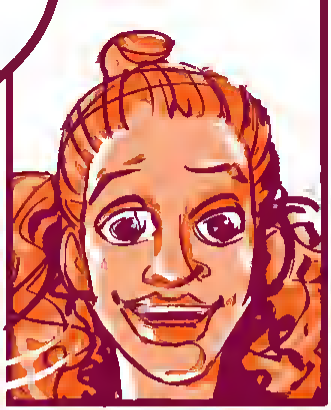
Ha, people these days don't understand artistry. It's all ironically recycled horseshit from ten years ago.

Haha!
...Well..someone with *your* talent and vision—



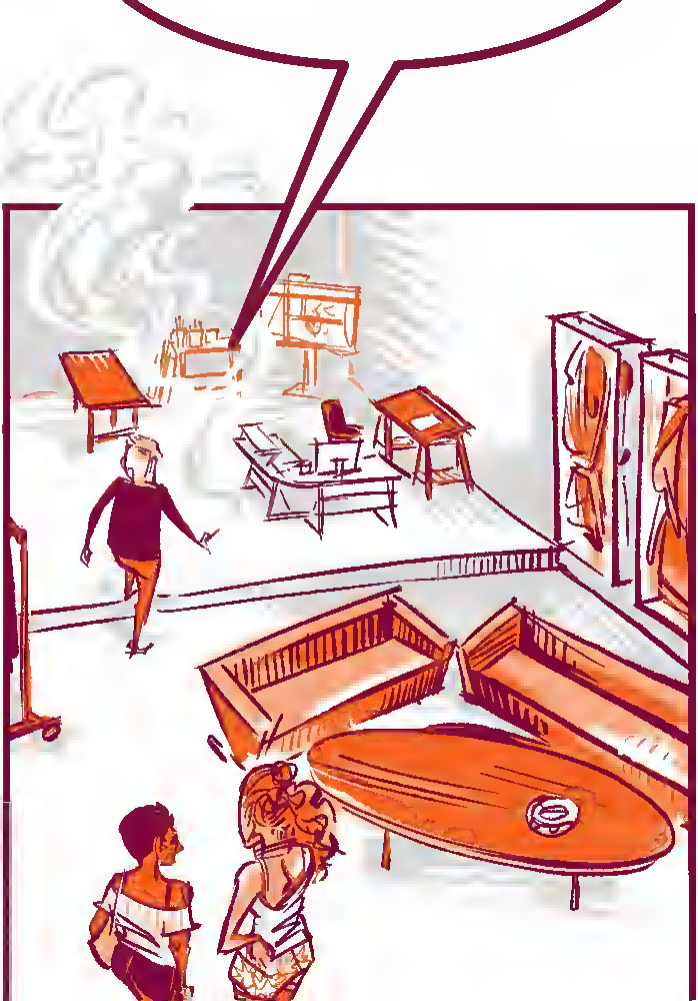
—can probably use that to your advantage. What are you working

on now?

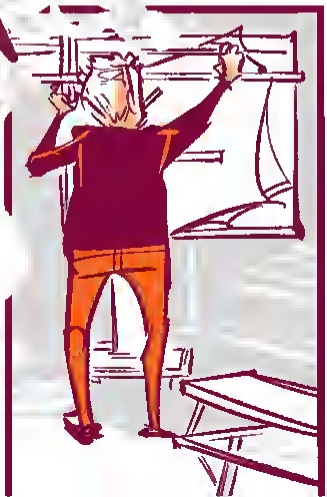


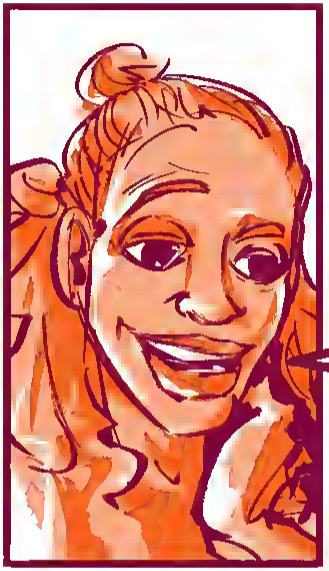
Well, right now I'm having something I like to call a blue-sky day.

Little method I came up with to keep my creative juices flowing in this dead-eyed corporate atmosphere.



It's hard for artists, you know—having to wrestle with practical matters and also keep yourself open to inspiration.





Ha!

Yeah, I know what you mean!

Hm?

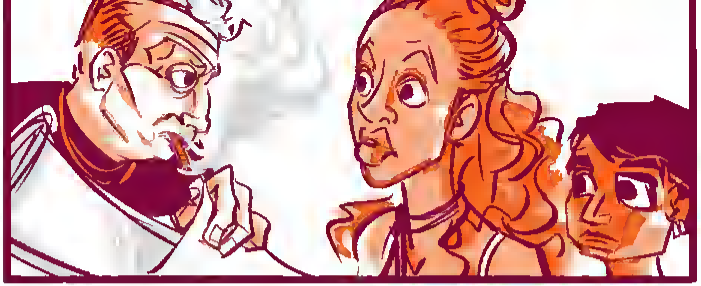
Oh, that's right. You sing some.

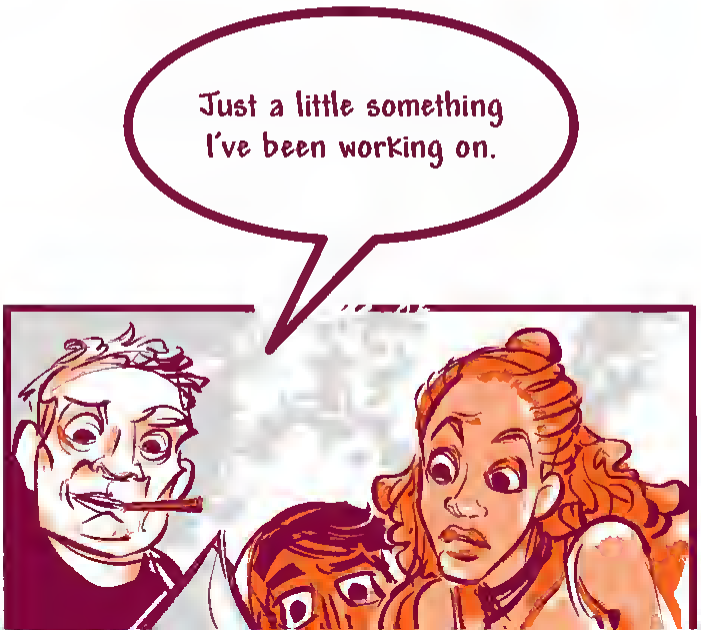
Yeah, I guess there's some aspects of that that are artistic.

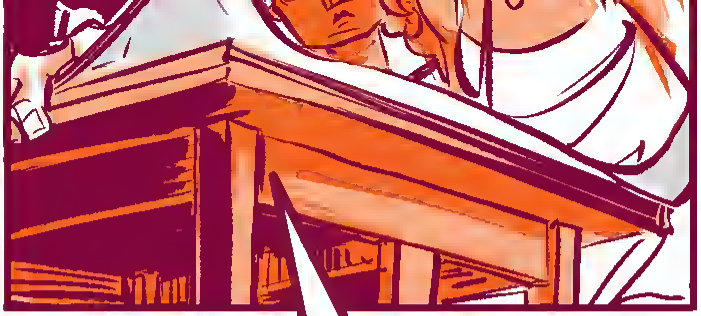
Now, I'll have to ask you not to take any photos, please—this is all proprietary.

But if you're into fashion it's a bit of a treat. Most of these are too edgy to ever see production.

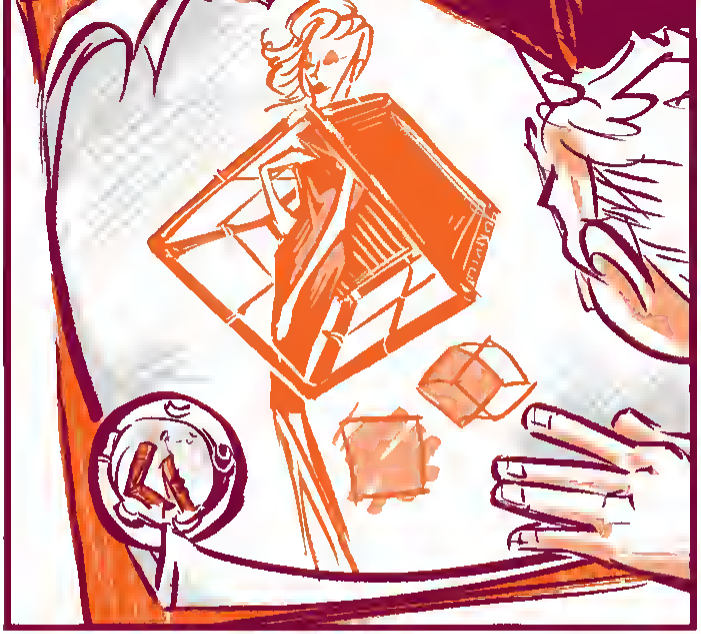
Oh wow.




Just a little something
I've been working on.



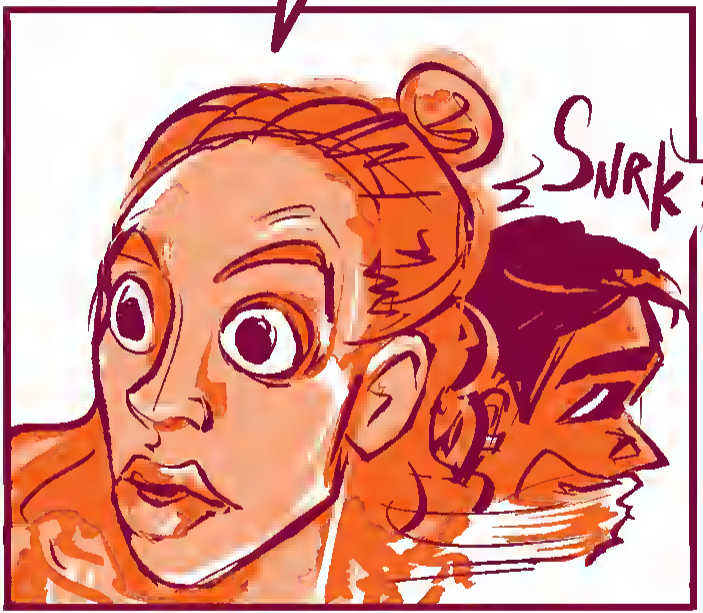
Would never sell, of course. Today's public isn't sophisticated enough to appreciate this kind of experimental play on form.



...Oh.

That's so... striking.

That's so... shrinking.



Part of a series

I'm doing on the platonic solids.

Going back to my art school roots, you know. Greek shit.

Yes. Wow. Terrific stuff.

Um. Well, speaking of

roots—

Obviously I've been a fan of yours for a *really* long time, and I know you started under Marco Gallo, but *wow*.

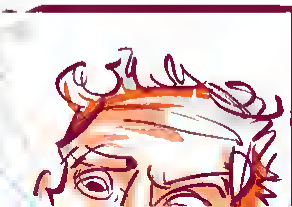
I mean, especially getting the chance to look at ...all this, you've just come *so far* into your own as an artist since your early days working with Gallo.

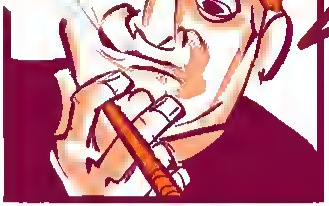
Do you think he influenced you at all? Artistically?

Mmmm.

Well, of course *all* great artists stand on the shoulders of giants, and Marco was certainly one of the better designers for his time.

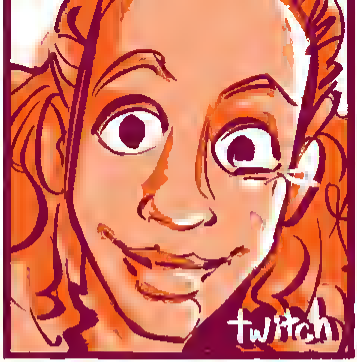
Sure, yeah, I like to think that I took what I could from the experience.





Obviously it was a great opportunity to network in the industry.

Knowing the right people is far more important for success than how talented you are, as I'm sure you know.



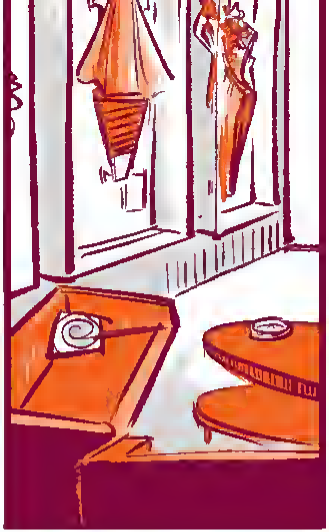
Marco was good at what he did, for sure.

One of those old-school function-over-form types. Excellent craftsman.

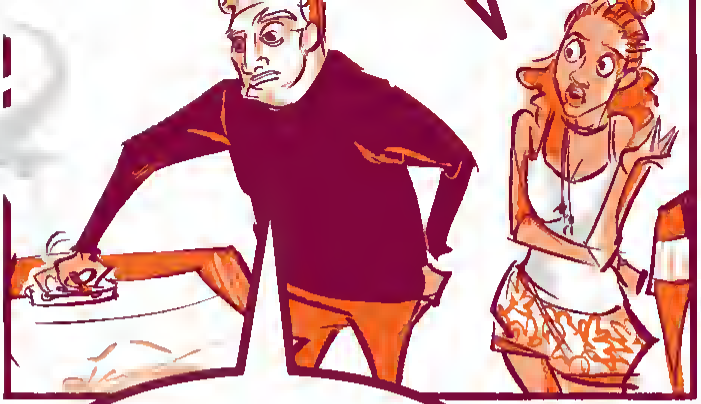
I've still got a few

of his pieces around.

Later stuff, after his best years were behind him, but it's still sturdy as hell.



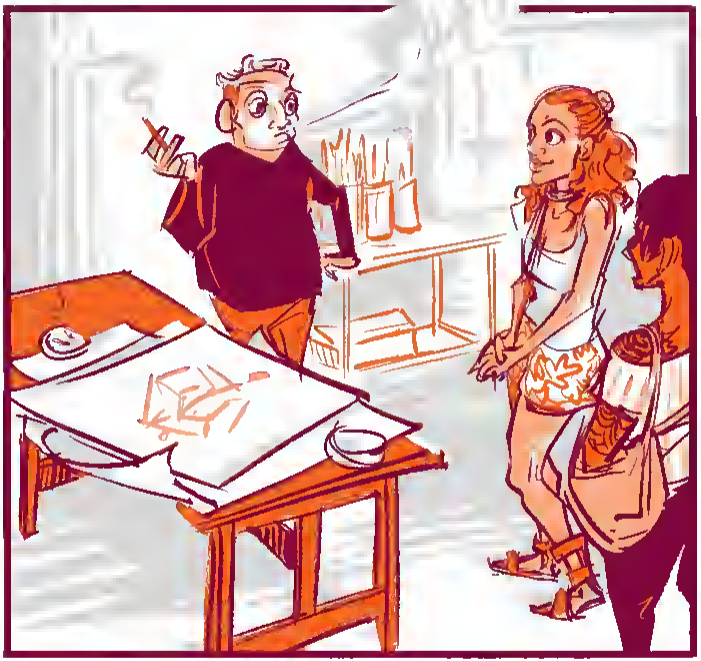
Oh gosh, I hope your security's good in here! After what just happened at the fashion museum, I mean.

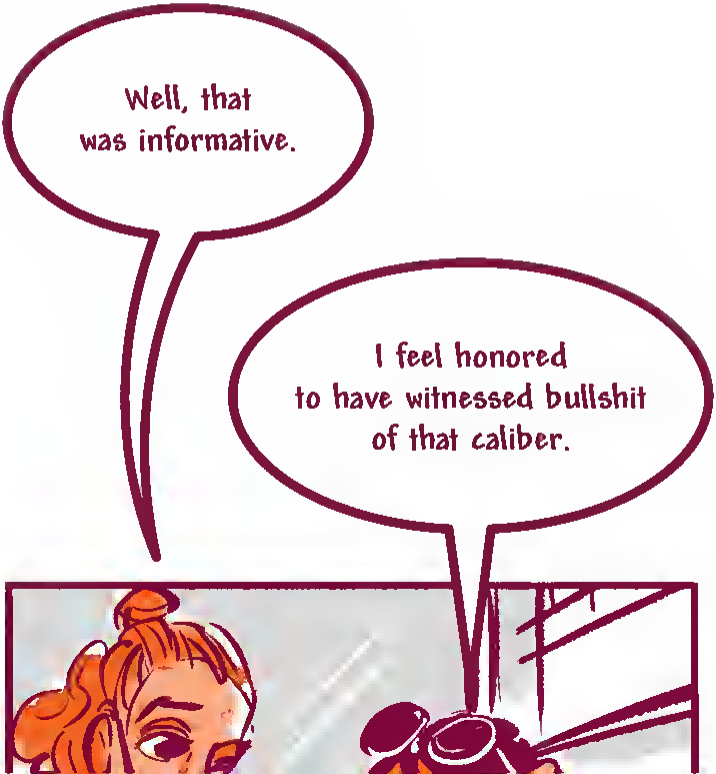


Oh, there's no demand for those—all anybody wants is his Nicolette Period.

His wife kept all the really good stuff.

Oh. You don't mind if I smoke, do you?




Well, that was informative.
I feel honored to have witnessed bullshit of that caliber.

The guy sure can talk.

Please, he can only *dream* of being on your level.

You walked in there without the first clue who he was, and still fawned over him enough to soothe his ego and get him on topic.

Legend.

He does seem like he's done well for himself, though.

...Do you ever think about that?

Huh? Think about what?

Well, I assume you don't want to be my assistant *forever*.

Have you thought about what you want to do next? Where you see yourself going after this?

Uh. No?
Not really.

...Wait, is this a hint? Is something going on? Should I be worried about my job?

No, no!

I just don't want you to feel
stuck following me around if

you have a dream to chase, you know?

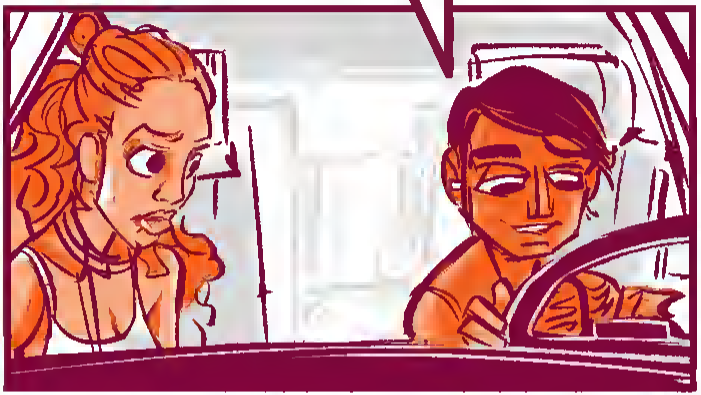
I—. That's—

That's really sweet, Carrie.

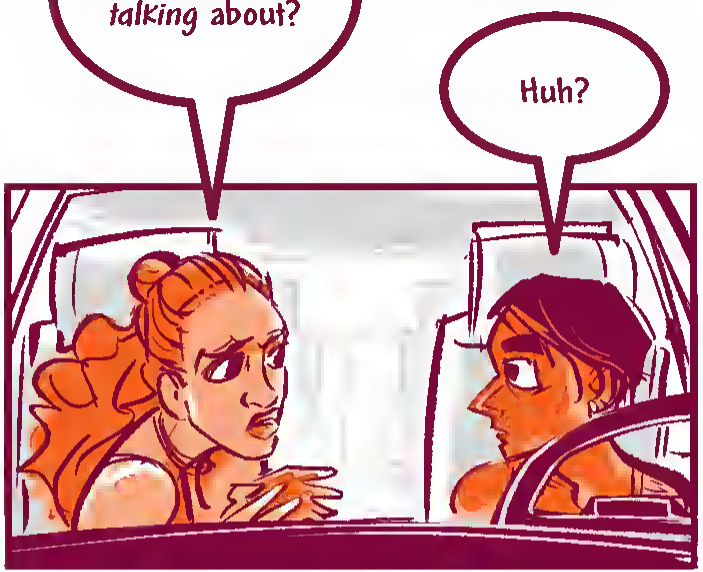
But if I wasn't following you around I'd probably just end up running around after someone else.

I think I'll stick to the errands and leave the exciting

stuff to people who have their shit together.



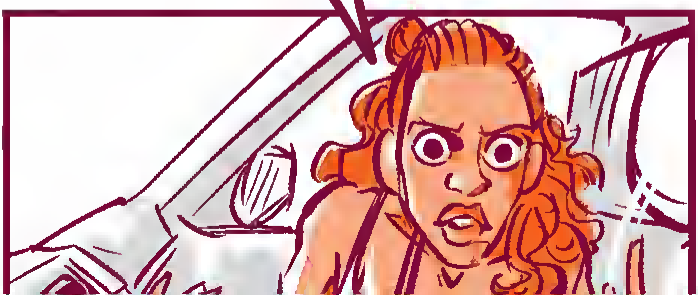
What are you

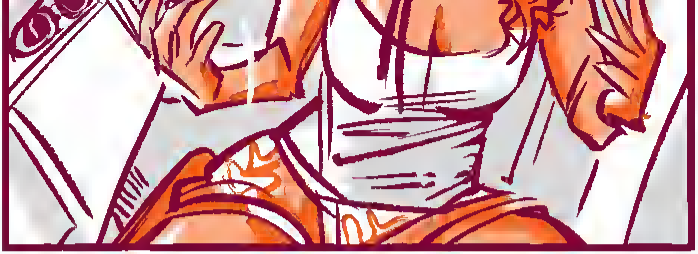


You have your shit together more than anyone I know. You're smart, you're organized, you adapt quickly to *completely ridiculous* situations.

I never have a clue what time it is, or remember anyone's name from one meeting to the next.

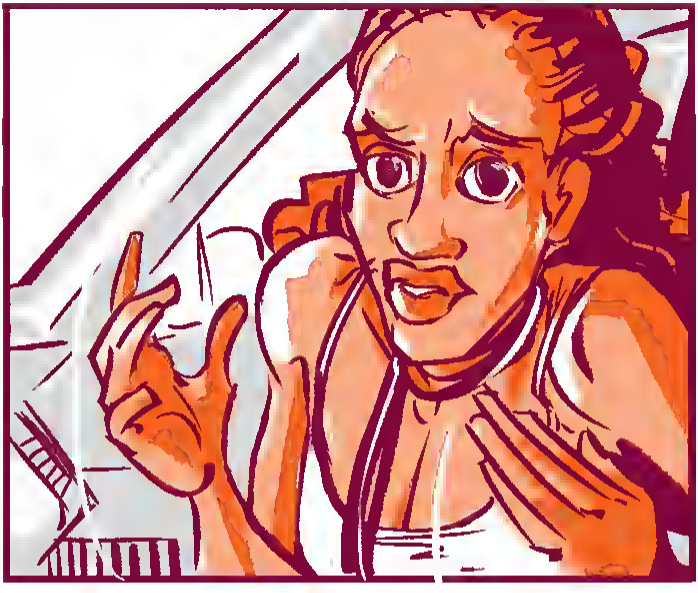
You're great with people, you can wrangle all these fussy little details that give me hives to think about.





You're like...*life glue*, and you make it look easy.

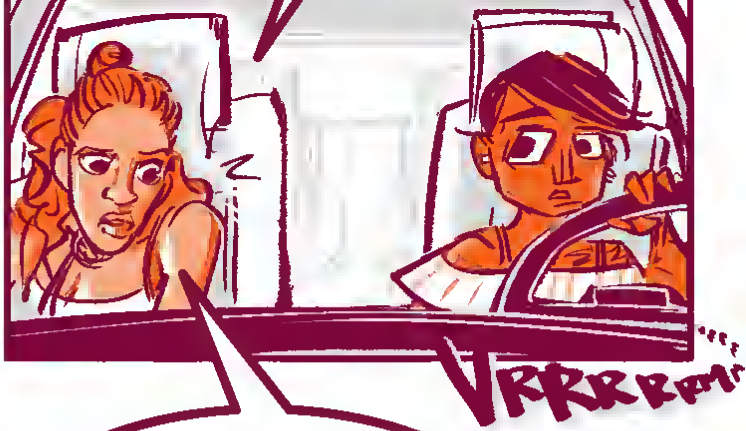
You're an amazing assistant, but you could definitely do a lot of other things, too.



Uh.
Sorry. That came out weirdly aggressive.

I just...I know I lean on you a lot.

But I don't want you to feel stuck as my assistant out of some sense of obligation or whatever if there's something you'd rather be working toward.



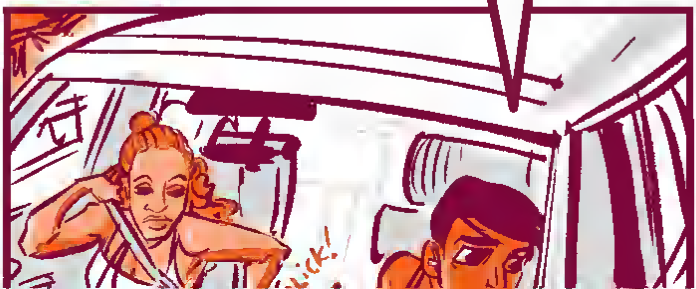
I *do* consider you a friend, so if I can, I'd like to help you get wherever you want to end up. That's all.

Oh. Um. Thanks, Carrie.

But I like where I am, right now. I like my life.

I'm not, like, secretly dreaming of starting up a vegan restaurant or a lifestyle magazine or something.

I like...taking care of you.



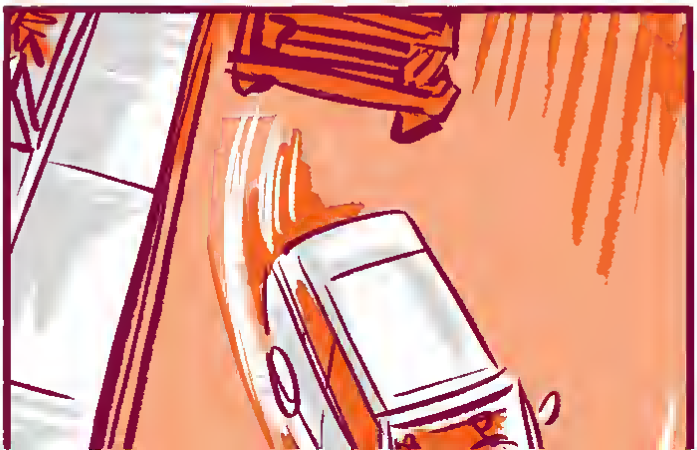
Someone!

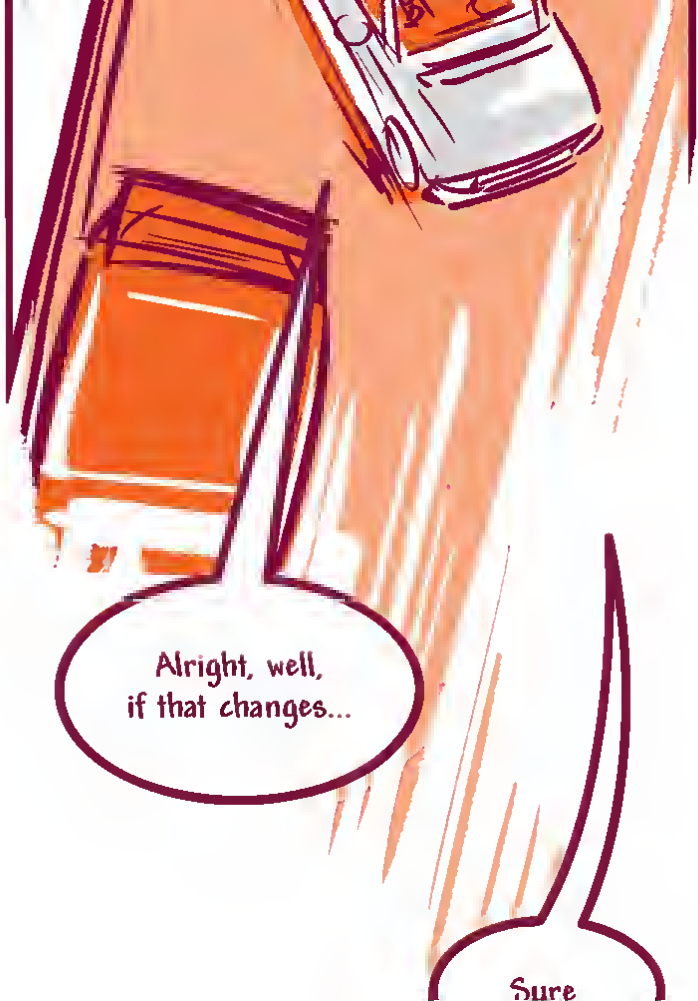
Person.

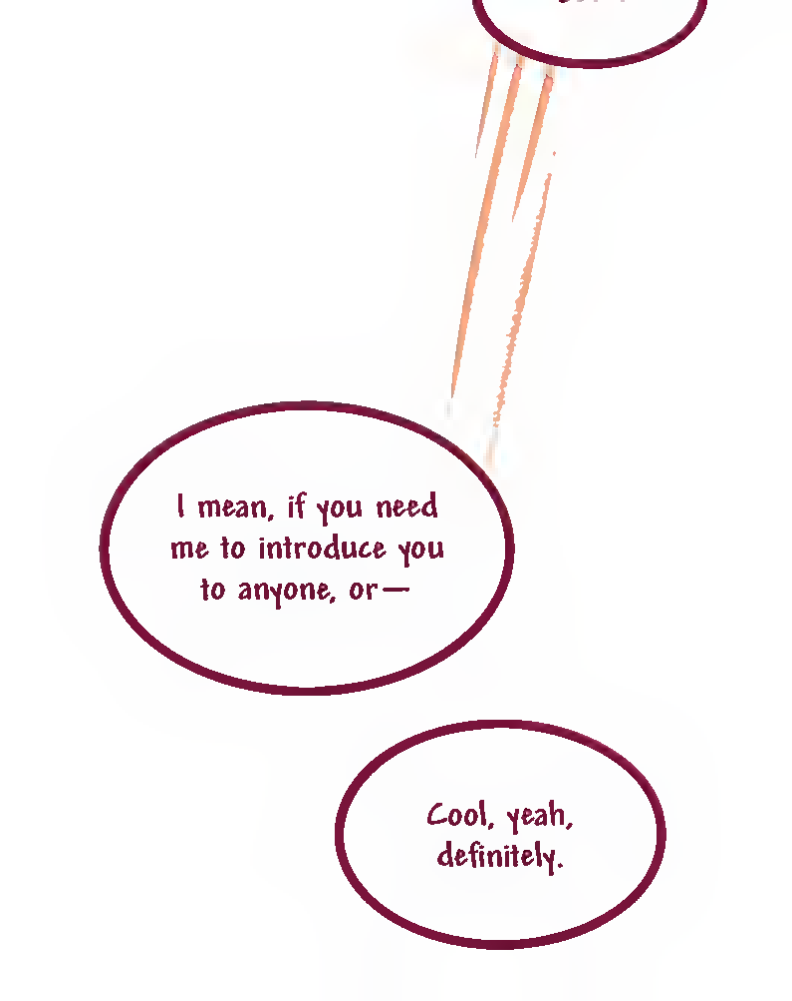
People.

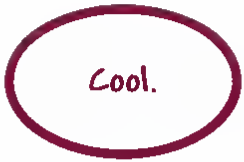
In general,

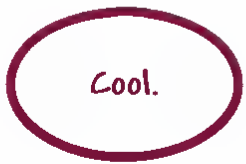
I mean.




Alright, well, if that changes...
Sure


I mean, if you need me to introduce you to anyone, or—
Cool, yeah, definitely.


Cool.


Cool.